

2027 Periodic Update – Work Plan & Public Participation Plan Summary



"Home of the World's Largest Cherry Pie"

This **Work Plan** summary provides an overview of the City of George's 2027 Periodic Update to its Comprehensive Plan and Development Regulations, as required by the Growth Management Act (RCW 36.70A). The update is structured into a two-year process (2025–2027) with key deliverables, public engagement, and formal adoption steps.

****Year 1 (2025–2026): Planning, Research & Data Gathering****

- Develop Work Plan and Public Participation Plan, aligned with community needs and coordinated with Climate Resiliency planning.
- Conduct three major Commerce checklists: Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO), Comprehensive Plan, and Development Regulations. Each checklist identifies legislative gaps and required updates.
- Coordinate with Grant County on population projections (to 2047) and conduct a Land Capacity Analysis to ensure zoning and densities can meet future housing and employment demands.
- Hold a public seminar in mid-2026 to present research findings and gather feedback.

****Year 2 (2026): Drafting Updated Documents & Public Review****

- Draft and present updates to: CAO; Development Regulations; and Comprehensive Plan elements across three phases, including Land Use, Housing, Capital Facilities, Transportation, Utilities, Parks, Economic Development, and Climate Planning.
- Conduct public workshops throughout summer and fall 2026, with community review of highlighted changes.

****Adoption Process (Dec 2026–June 2027)****

- Planning Agency submits an Intent to Adopt to Commerce and compiles a Public Participation Report.
- Complete 60-day Commerce review and SEPA environmental review, including notices, comment periods, and hearings.
- Planning Agency provides final recommendations, followed by City Council public hearing and preparation of the final adopting ordinance (June 2027).
- City submits Notice of Adoption to Commerce within 10 days of adoption.

The **Public Participation Plan** (PPP) establishes a process for early, continuous, and inclusive engagement, ensuring the public can meaningfully shape the update. The PPP fulfills the GMA mandate for broad dissemination of information, multiple opportunities for comment, and varied communication methods. The City seeks to engage the community across five levels: inform, consult, involve, collaborate, and empower. Engagement may occur through in-person meetings, digital platforms, printed materials, and outreach targeted to underserved communities.

****Foundation and Updates****

The existing 2018–2038 Comprehensive Plan contains baseline participation measures such as public hearings, written comment opportunities, utility-bill notifications, and website updates. The new PPP expands on these to reflect technological changes, new legislation, and lessons learned since 2018.

****New Technologies****

Online meetings and platforms (Zoom, Teams, etc.) now allow broader participation, especially for those with mobility or access barriers. Social media is central to quick outreach and feedback, though its effectiveness depends on understanding which platforms the community relies on most.

****New Legislation****

Recent state laws increase expectations for inclusive planning. HB 1181 requires incorporating climate considerations and involving overburdened communities. HB 1717 requires notification and the opportunity for voluntary tribal participation in planning processes. These requirements strengthen the need to proactively reach underserved populations rather than expecting them to attend traditional meetings.

****Areas for Improvement****

The updated PPP outlines enhancements in several areas:

1. Role Identification

- **Advisory Team:** community-based steering group.
- **City Council:** final decision-makers following hearings and public input.
- **City Staff/Consultants:** facilitators, coordinators, and technical support.
- **Community Members:** anyone living, working, visiting, or interacting with the City.
- **State/Regional Agencies and Tribes:** key partners providing expertise and historical, cultural, and environmental insight.

2. Expanded Outreach to Tribes and Underserved Groups

The City lies within the traditional territories of the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation and must engage in respectful consultation. The Hispanic community,

representing **nearly 90%** of George’s population, remains historically underrepresented; improved participation channels will aim to elevate these voices.

3. Broader Use of Engagement Tools

The PPP encourages use of social media, regional apps, AI-enabled tools, and other digital resources alongside traditional print, in-person events, and surveys.

****Plan Elements Specific to the 2027 Update****

The Comprehensive Plan update will occur alongside the creation of the new **Climate Planning Element**, requiring careful coordination to avoid public fatigue. Engagement will follow the schedule outlined in Appendix B, including:

- Early-stage presentations (Winter 2025)
- Data and checklist review (Summer 2026)
- Workshops on draft plans and regulations (Late Summer–Fall 2026)
- At least two public hearings (2027)
- Multiple Council decision points (2027)